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ABSTRACT

This 32-item annotated bibliography details picture books, realistic fiction, poetry, and biographies (most of which were published in 1994) that deal with intergenerational relationships. Each entry in the bibliography indicates the literary genre and recommended age level of the book. The bibliography begins with a brief introductory section that discuses why multigenerational and multicultural stories should be told, who should tell such stories, when to tell such stories, and where to find those stories. (RS)

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TRADITION AND STORY: INTERGENERATIONAL TIES OF PAST TO PRESENT

by

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ABSTRACT

Stories are a powerful way to preserve and transmit family heritage and culture. People of all ages have a deep desire to trace their roots. They want to know what their ancestors experienced, how they felt, what they believed. Through oral stories and written stories in children's literature, young children can gain a better understanding of their own heritage and come to appreciate and respect other cultures too. Many multigenerational and multicultural selections about traditional and nontraditional families can help children find universal truths and gain an empathetic understanding of cultures different that their own. A bibliography of children's books on intergenerational relationships is included.

INTRODUCTION

"Once upon a time..." is a powerful phrase in oral language that evokes a special and memorable relationship between the storyteller and the audience. This simple phrase sets the mood as the power of oral story unfolds. The attention of the audience is captured in that instance and is not released until another familiar phrase "...and they lived happily ever after." is uttered and the story comes to a predictable end.

Storytelling is as old as oral language (Reed, 1987). Every culture that has lived in the world in different times and places has a collection of stories that it calls its own. Since prehistoric times, people of all ages have gathered around the communal campfire at the end of the day to share their experiences and listen to the storyteller relate the tales. Since prehistoric times, storytelling has stimulated the imaginations of

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the listeners, enabling them to visualize the characters and events of the story in their mind's eye, to construct a personal and unique meaning from the spoken words.

WHY TELL STORIES

For generations, families have told stories to instill values, to pass on a culture's history, its traditions and customs, to express their people's hopes and fears, to explain natural events or phenomena, and to entertain. When stories are incorporated into the elementary classroom, they enable young learners to acquire and refine their literacy skills (Buchoff, 1995; Van Groenou, 1995). Storytelling and story reading help young children build their spoken and written vocabularies. A rich experience with oral and written stories helps children understand how stories work, their integral parts and structure. Research has shown that by reading and listening to stories, and later, by participating in storytelling activities, children become more articulate speakers, (Burke, 1990). Storytelling and story reading can promote children's development of story writing (Buchoff, 1995).

Through a rich experience in storytelling and story reading, children can gain a greater respect and understanding of their own culture (Genisio & Soundy, 1994). They can learn more about themselves. They can come to appreciate and understand other cultures as well (Imdieke, 1991; Willison & Ruane, 1995). Through vicarious experiences shared through oral and written story, children can begin to gain information about other people, their values, their beliefs, their ways of life. They can begin to understand the motives for others' actions and come to respect persons of older generations for their wisdom and experience.

WHO TELLS STORIES

Anyone can tell stories. It does not take a special talent. We communicate in story throughout the day. We remember in story and we make sense of our world through story. According to Bruner (in Rosen, 1988) stories or narrative require an important mode of thought. This thought process helps us to order our experiences and construct reality. Mallan (1991) believes that unless children are encouraged to use stories or narrative in their thinking, writing, and speaking we, as teachers, are failing to allow them to develop their full range of cognitive ability.

WHEN TO TELL STORIES

Storytelling does not require a special setting. Situations that trigger the memory of any event as the beginning of a story happen all around us. Sometimes the best stories are told spontaneously, on the spur of the moment.

Childhood is a time full of stories. Situations for hearing and sharing stories are frequent and common aspects of family life. Special occasions such as holidays, reunions, weddings, or funerals offer many opportunities to hear and tell family stories. Sharing family stories at these events is a natural way family members can remember the past. It offers a way to catch up on family news in the present and carry on traditions into the future. These family stories, anecdotes and reminiscences are meant to be embellished and passed on to future generations.

WHERE TO FIND STORIES

Intergenerational stories are part of a family's history. They are a family's heritage, passed down from the oldest members to the youngest. Old scrapbooks, photograph albums, letters, journals, diaries, and family bibles are often rich sources of information about events and people of the past.

Selections of children's literature are excellent sources for intergenerational stories that have been written down. Often, authors tell stories from their own childhood or from their family history. Careful research enables authors to incorporate information about other real or fictitious people in their stories who lived in other times or places. Children can come to realize that events that preceded the present were often necessary to make the present possible (Norton, 1991).

Many multigenerational and multicultural books about traditional and nontraditional families can offer varied perspectives on family life and relationships. These experiences with story can help children find universal truths and gain an empathetic understanding of cultures different than their own.

TRADITION AND STORY:
INTERGENERATIONAL TIES OF PAST TO PRESENT
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS

"Grandmothers are the ones children go to for love,
for stories, for comfort when they've been scolded, for guidance,
and, of course, for treats."
"My Grandmothers"
Mildred Bollinger Andrews
Grandmothers: Poems, Reminiscences, and Short Stories About the Keepers of Our Traditions

"To the old ones of my childhood who taught me
the most important lesson of all;
That I did not need to be perfect to be loved.
That no one does."
Alice Walker
To Hell With Dying

Ackerman, The Night Crossing. illus. by Elizabeth Sayles. Knopf, 1994.

Karen Ackerman, author of The Song and Dance Man, tells the story of one family's escape to Switzerland at the beginning of World War II. This sensitive story offers a first look at the Holocaust as seen through the eyes of Clara, a young Austrian girl.
Primary Grades. Historical Fiction.

Bachrach, Susan D. Tell Them We Remember: The Story of the Holocaust. photographs from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Little, Brown and Company, 1994.

"The first to perish were the children...From these...our new dawn might have risen." This powerful photo-study of the Holocaust tells how the lives of innocent people were affected throughout Europe.
intermediate Grades and up. Social Studies Informational Book.

Binch, Caroline. Gregory Cool. illus. by author. Dial, 1994.

Gregory flies to the Caribbean island of Tobago to visit his grandparents and cousin. Vivid, watercolor illustrations and sensitively worded text tell the story of how this young boy learns to enjoy island life.
Primary Grades and up. Contemporary Realistic Fiction.

Blos, Joan W. Brooklyn Doesn't Rhyme. illus. by Paul Birling. Scribners, 1994.

Rosie, a young Polish girl, records the events and lives of her immigrant family and friends living in Brooklyn in the early 1900's.
Intermediate Grades. Historical Fiction.

Buckley, Helen E. Grandfather and I. illus. by Jan Ormerod. Lothrop, 1994.

Delicate watercolor and pencil sketches and simply worded text tell the story of one young child and his loving relationship with his grandfather.
Primary Grades. Picture Book.

Buckley, Helen E. Grandmother and I. illus. by Jan Ormerod. Lothrop, 1994.

Originally published in 1960 with illustrations by Paul Galdone, this companion book to Grandfather and I relates the story of the warm and happy relationship of a young girl and her grandmother.
Primary Grades. Picture Book.

Bunting, Eve. A Day's Work. illus. by Ronald Himler. Clarion Books, 1994.

Francisco, a young Mexican American boy, has gone with his grandfather to find work because his grandfather does not speak English. Sensitive language and watercolor illustrations realistically portray the story of how the young boy learns a lesson in honesty from his grandfather.
Primary Grades. Contemporary Realistic Fiction/Picture Book

Cisneros, Sandra. Hairs/Pelitos. illus. by Terry Ybanez. Alfred A. Knopf, 1994.

This is a story told in English and Spanish from Sandra Cisneros's best-selling book, The House on Mango Street. Vibrant, acrylic illustrations and descriptive language tell of the simple differences among all the members of a loving family. A warm story of diversity for the primary classroom.
Primary Grades. Picture Book.

Croll, Carolyn. Too Many Babas. illus. by author. HarperCollins Publishers. 1979, 1994.

"Sometimes too many cooks spoil the broth!" This I Can Read Book tells the humorous story of four peasant friends who finally find a way to work together to make a pot of soup for dinner. A display of Russian costumes at the Metropolitan Museum of Art was the inspiration for the colorful illustrations.
Primary Grades. Picture Book.

Dalokay, Vedat. (Trans. by Guner Ener). Sister Shako and Kolo the Goat: Memories of My Childhood in Turkey. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1994.

Originally written in Turkish, this is a touching and often poetic tale of reality and fantasy. It is the story of a young boy and his relationship with Sister Shako, a remarkable old woman. The loving and sensitive narration is a beautiful introduction to the language, daily life, and traditions of a small village in eastern Turkey.
Intermediate Grades. Historical Fiction.

Fox, Mem. Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge. illus. by Julie Vivas. Kane/Miller Book Publishers, 1984.

A young boy searches for the meaning of "memory" so he can help his ninety-six year old friend find hers. This is a heartwarming story of the loving relationship a young boy has with people who live in an old people's home next to his house.
Primary and Intermediate Grades. Picture Book.

Goldin, Barbara Diamond. Red Means Good Fortune: A Story of San Francisco's Chinatown. illus. by Wenhai Ma. Viking, 1994.

This selection from the Once Upon America Series is a chapter book about the New Year's celebration in San Francisco's Chinatown in 1868. Jin Mun is a twelve-year-old Chinese boy who works in his father's laundry. He befriends a poor slave girl and finds a way to set her free. It is an interesting and informative account of the Chinese immigrant experience in the late 1800's. Believable characters and an exciting plot make this period in American history more meaningful and relevant for young readers.
Intermediate Grades. Historical Fiction.

Giovanni, Nikki (Ed.). Grandmothers: Poems, Reminiscences, and Short Stories About the Keepers of Our Traditions. Holt, 1994.

A wonderful collection of poems and stories expressing women's thoughts about their grandmothers. This book is a powerful "testament to the bonds that tie us together across time...." Contributors include Mary Elizabeth King, Gloria Naylor, and Kyoko Mori.
Intermediate Grades and up. Poetry.

Giovanni, Nikki. Knoxville, Tennessee. illus. by Larry Johnson. Scholastic, 1994.

This poem is a celebration of summer delights: corn on the cob, family picnics, homemade ice cream. It is the story of growing up with loving grandparents in Knoxville.
Primary and Intermediate Grades. Poetry.

Hall, Donald. The Farm Summer 1942. illus. by Barry Moser. Dial, 1994.

A peaceful, descriptive narrative of a young boy's summer spent on his grandparents' farm while his parents work in the war effort. Warm, full-page, watercolor illustrations depict farm life of the 1940's.
Primary Grades. Historical Fiction/Picture Book.

Harshman, Marc. Moving Days. illus. by Wendy Popp. Cobblehill Books, 1994.

A young boy must move from his house in the country where he has lived all his life. As he helps his parents pack, he finds some long forgotten treasures: a toy top, photographs of his mother and father as college students, and his uncle's horse and buggy tools.
Primary and Intermediate Grades. Contemporary Realist Fiction.

Hesse, Karen. Letters from Rifka. illus. by Trina Schart Hyman. Henry Holt and Company, 1992.

An ALA Notable Book for Children, A School Library Journal Best Book, and a Winner of the International Reading Association Award, Letters from Rifka is the story of the author's Great-Aunt Lucy and her immigration to America. This is a memorable and simply told story of the immigrant experience in the early 1900's.
Intermediate Grades and up. Historical Fiction.

Khalsa, Dayal Kaur. Tales of a Gambling Grandma. illus. by author. Clarkson N. Potter, 1986.

An ALA Notable Children's Book and Notable Children's Trade Book in the Language Arts, this is a child's account of her grandmother's life. It is the story of a woman who has immigrated to the United States from Russia. This unique and delightful woman marries a plumber and gambles to earn extra money for her family.
Intermediate Grades. Biography.

Kudlinski, Kathleen V. Facing West: A Story of the Oregon Trail. illus. by James Watling. Viking, 1994.

This chapter book about the Oregon Trail is a selection from the Once Upon America Series. It is spring 1845. A young boy and his family start out in a covered wagon on a dangerous journey from Missouri to the Pacific coast. The trip will take six months and is over two thousand miles long. Vivid descriptions and believable dialogue make the characters and this period in American history come alive for young readers.
Intermediate. Historical Fiction.

MacDonald, Suse. Nanta's Lion. illus. by author. Morrow Junior Books. 1995.

The men of a Maasai village in Africa leave early one morning to hunt a lion that has been killing their cattle. Nanta, a curious young girl, decides to find the lion for herself. The die-cut format of this search-and-find adventure is both a story and a game. It is an entertaining book that invites the reader to join in the search. Primary Grades. Picture book.

MacLachlan, Patricia. All the Places to Love. illus. by Mike Wimmer. Harper Collins, 1994.

A young boy tells of the favorite places he shares with his family on his grandparents' farm. It is the story of the love of life's simple pleasures and one family's connection to the land. Brightly colored, full-page illustrations accompany the text and help to tell the story.
All Ages. Picture Book.

McKissack, Patricia C. and Frederick L. Christmas in the Big House, Christmas in the Quarters. illus. by John Thompson. Scholastic, 1994.

Carefully researched stories and illustrations tell of Christmas on a Southern plantation before the Civil War. There is a stark contrast between the elegant grandeur of the Big House with the meager living conditions in the Slave Quarters. The stories and songs of the slaves are filled with hope that they will someday be free. Appended notes give more information on customs and events of this historical period.
Intermediate Grades. Historical Fiction.

Moore, Elaine. Grandma's Garden. illus. by Dan Andreasen. Lothrop, 1994.

This is the story of a young girl and the special relationship she and her grandmother have. The granddaughter and her grandmother work in the garden to prepare it for planting.
Primary Grades. Picture Book.

Onyefulu, Ifeoma. Emeka's Gift, An African Counting Story. photographs by author. Cobblehill Books. 1995.

Emeka, a young Nigerian boy, sets off to visit his grandmother in a neighboring village. On his journey, Emeka thinks of different presents he would like to bring her. Beautiful, color photographs and descriptive language introduce the reader to the social life and customs of southern Nigeria.
Primary Grades. Picture Book.

Orr, Katherine. My Grandpa and the Sea. illus. by author. Carolrhoda Books, Inc.,1990.

Lila and her grandfather live on the Caribbean island of St. Lucia. She has a special relationship with her grandfather. He is a fisherman and he teaches her that "if we give back something [to the sea] for everything we take, we will always meet with abundance."
Primary Grades. Picture Book.

Rochelle, Belinda. When Jo Louis Won the Title. illus. by Larry Johnson. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994.

Jo Louis, a young African American girl, learns that she is named for the famous boxer and the night her grandparents first met. This is the heartwarming story of the significance of a family name. Beautifully colored illustrations help to tell the story.
Primary Grades. Contemporary Realistic Fiction.

Sandler, Martin W. Immigrants. HarperCollins, 1995.

This book chronicles the stories of immigrants who came to start a new life in America between 1870-1930. The trip from Europe was not an easy one. Numerous photographs illustrate this resource book. Easily understood text help young readers experience what life must have been like for an immigrant in the late 19th century.
Intermediate Grades and up. Social Studies Informational Book.

Schur, Maxine Rose. Day of Delight: A Jewish Sabbath in Ethiopia. illus. by Brian Pickney. Dial Books, 1994.

Brian Pickney's brilliantly colored scratchboard drawings and Maxine Rose Schur's beautifully descriptive text tell the story of Menelik and his family who live high in the hills of Ethiopia. The blacksmith's son and his family prepare for the Sabbath. This is the story of Ethiopian Jews who have all but vanished because of civil war and famine.
Primary Grades. Contemporary Realistic Fiction/Picture Book.

Turner, Ann. The Christmas House. illus. by Nancy Edwards Calder. Harper Collins, 1994.

Ann Turner, author of Dakota Dugout, has created a warmhearted collection of poems of what Christmas means to different members of the family. Even the family pets have their turn. Beautifully detailed illustrations accompany each poem.
Primary Grades and up. Poetry.

Wild, Margaret. Our Granny. illus. by Julie Vivas. Ticknor & Fields, 1994.

"Some grannies have...thin legs, fat knees, bristly chins, interesting hair, crinkly eyes, friendly smiles, or big soft laps. Our granny has a wobbly bottom." This is the story of one very special granny and the children who love her.
Primary Grades. Contemporary Realistic Fiction/Picture Book.

Wilder, Laura Ingalls. Dance at Grandpa's. HarperCollins Publishers, 1932, 1959, 1987, 1994.

Dance at Grandpa's is a picture book adaptation of one chapter from Little House in the Big Woods. It is a wonderful introduction to the Laura Ingalls Wilder stories for beginning readers. Delicate, colored pencil illustrations, reminiscent the Garth Williams' drawings, accompany this story of early pioneer life in Wisconsin.
Primary Grades. Historical Fiction.

Wolf, Winfried. Christmas with Grandfather. illus. by Eugen Sopko. North-South Books, 1994.

Thomas and his mother do not look forward to Christmas because his his father has just died in an accident. Then a telegram arrives from his grandfather, inviting them to spend the holiday with him in his remote home. Thomas overcomes his grief and allows himself to feel the true joy of the holiday season.
Primary Grades. Picture Book.

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